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Message Text

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NODIS CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: KS, KN, US
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT PARK REPLY TO SECRETARY'S LETTER

REF: (A) STATE 208614, (B) SEOUL 6571

THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS SENT ME THE FOLLOWING REPLY FROM PRESIDENT PARK TO SECRETARY KISSINGER'S LETTER OF AUGUST 23 (REF A):

"AUGUST 24, 1976

"DEAR MR. SECRETARY:

"I WISH TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER OF AUGUST 23 THAT YOU SENT ME THROUGH THE GOOD OFFICES OF AMBASSADOR SNEIDER.

"I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS ANEW MY DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY OF THE TWO AMERICAN OFFICERS WHO WERE VICTIMIZED BY THE NORTH KOREAN COMMUNISTS' PREMEDITATED BARBAROUS ACT IN THE JOINT SECURITY OF THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE ON AUGUST 18.

"IT IS GRATIFYING AND ENCOURAGING TO US THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT PROMPTLY RESPONDED TO THE INCIDENT AND HAS TAKEN A SERIES OF MEASURES TO COPE WITH THE SITUATION. I AM ALSO PLEASED WITH THE SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF THE OPERATION IN THE JOINT SECURITY AREA THAT WAS PLANNED AND EXECUTED JOINTLY BY THE KOREAN AND
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AMERICAN FORCES UNDER THE COMMAND OF GENERAL STILWELL,

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COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE UNITED NATIONS FORCES.

"AS YOU NOTED, IT IS HEARTENING INDEED THAT EFFECTIVE COOPERATION IS BEING MAINTAINED BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES IN COPING WITH THE NORTH KOREAN PROVOCATIONS AND THAT YOU HAVE REAFFIRMED YOUR GOVERNMENT'S WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE THIS CLOSE CONSULTATION INTO THE FUTURE.

"NOW THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM THAT WE FACE IS HOW TO CONCLUDE SUCCESSFULLY THIS INCIDENT. IT WOULD BE MOST DESIRABLE UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES TO PREVENT THE PRESENT SITUATION FROM FURTHER ESCALATING BY MAKING THE NORTH KOREAN COMMUNISTS ADMIT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INCIDENT AND GIVE THEIR ASSURANCE THAT NO SUCH PROVOCATIONS WILL RECUR IN THE FUTURE.

"HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF THE NATURE OF THE NORTH KOREAN COMMUNISTS AS WE UNDERSTAND IT AND DRAWING ON THE LONG AND HARD EXPERIENCE WE HAVE HAD IN DEALING WITH THEM IN THE PAST, I REGRET TO SAY THAT THE CHANCE IS SLIM THAT THEY WOULD EVER SHOW ANY SINCERE AND BONA FIDE ATTITUDE TOWARD US.

"WE SHOULD CERTAINLY CONTINUE TO APPLY OUR MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC ACTIONS IN A MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO MAKE THE NORTH KOREAN COMMUNISTS ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INCIDENT AND GUARANTEE THAT NO PROVOCATIONS WILL BE REPEATED IN THE FUTURE. IN CASE THEY PERSIST IN DENYING TO DO SO, APPROPRIATE MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN TO MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND THAT THEY CANNOT COMMIT THEIR WANTON AND BRUTAL ACTS OF PROVOCATION WITH IMPUNITY. IF OUR RESPONSE IS TO BE CONFINED TO PROTESTS, IT IS FEARED THAT IT WILL ONLY ENHANCE THE POSSIBILITY THAT KIM IL SUNG AND HIS COMPANY WILL RESORT TO MORE SERIOUS AND BARBAROUS PROVOCATIONS IN THE FUTURE.

"HAVING EXPERIENCED THE SCOURGE OF WAR, THE KOREAN PEOPLE AND I ARE DESIROUS, PERHAPS MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE, OF PREVENTINGNWAR AND MITIGATING TENSION. HOWEVER, IT IS OUR FIRM BELIEF THAT SO FAR AS WE DEAL WITH THE NORTH KOREAN COMMUNISTS, THE BEST WAY OF PREVENTING FUTURE PROVOCATIONS OF MORE GRAVE NATURE AND OF DETERRING WAR IS TO PROVE BY ACTION OUR RESOLUTE DETERMINATION

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AND STRENGTH THAT WE WILL NOT TOLERATE PROVOCATIONS OF ANY SCOPE AND INTENSITY.

"WITH MY THANKS TO PRESIDENT FORD, YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT LEADERS FOR THE RESOLUTE AND DECISIVE STAND THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN SINCE THE OUTBREAK OF THE INCIDENT, I SINCERELY HOPE THAT PRESIDENT FORD AND YOU WILL GIVE A SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO MY VIEWS EXPRESSED HEREIN.

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"SINCERELY,

"/S/ PARK CHUNG HEE".
SNEIDER

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NNN

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